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It is recommended that each school district study the problems involved in early admission and adopt a local policy permitting the admission of qualified pupils regardless of present age requirements. The local school district, after an initial screening of applicants, assumed the cost of psychological testing in all cases where the cost of such testing might discourage parents of potentially qualified children. The trend was to require an admission age of five years by September for Kindergarten, and six years for first grade. Too few schools were found which provided for the early admission of children with superior intellectual capacities. Districts having such a policy existed mainly in the larger population areas where psychological services were readily available and where large concentrations of children of this age and ability resided.

Five criteria for potential admittees were proposed: chronological age, mental age, physical development and muscular coordination, emotional stability, and the child's attitude toward school and learning.

The committee concluded that there is little doubt that early admission to the school program is beneficial to the mentally advanced student. A survey of entrance age requirements, sample letters to parents, test forms and application entrance forms are appended.

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An Early Admissions Program

A Committee Report On School Planning For Adopting An Early Admissions Policy In The Public Schools of Minnesota

State of Minnesota
Department of Education
Division of Instruction
Elementary and Secondary Section

October
1962

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An Early Admissions Program

A Committee Report On School Planning For Adopting An Early Admissions Policy In The Public Schools Of Minnesota

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October
1962

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An Early Admissions Program

Statement of Problem:

This report is a reflection of how several local public school communities in Minnesota responded to the increasingly important challenge to our society for finding and nurturing intellectual talent. Their recommendations for an early admissions policy as one means for accomplishing this end within the framework of state regulations and law were the outcome of their deliberations.

An early admissions program is a special form of acceleration. Replicated research reports have affirmed the favorable results of early admission to school of children of superior mentality [Worcester (18), Hobson (9,10), Anderson (1)]. This method of initial evidence of "readiness" usually rests upon the results obtained from individual psychological examination, and judgements made concerning the physical, emotional and social maturity of the individual child.

Generally, children in Minnesota are admitted to public schools according to the calendar. A summary report on a survey of 1960-1961 entrance age requirements in the public schools of the state was made by the Division of Instruction in the State Department of Education, February 1961.* Kindergarten and first grade entrance ages for 1960-1961 were tabulated from returns from 435 superintendents representing 97 per cent of the graded elementary and secondary districts in the state. Of those responding, 243 districts or 56 per cent operated kindergartens. The results indicated nearly 36 per cent of these 243 districts, at that time, required a child to be <u>five years of age before October 1 for entrance to kindergarten</u>. In addition, 77 districts or about 32 per cent indicated local school boards had already taken action to <u>increase</u> the entrance age into kindergarten in the 1961-1962 calendar year. In these cases this meant a one-month or more increase in entrance age requirements, or that at least 8 per cent of the children were required to be one year older before entering school.

Facts on the first grade entrance age requirements from 430 graded elementary and secondary public school districts revealed in the same report that 26.5 per cent required a child be <u>six years of age before October 1 for entrance to the first grade</u>. However, 40.7 per cent of the districts still permitted a child to enter first grade if his birthdate was during December. There were 130 districts, or 30 per cent of those responding, that indicated their school boards had taken action to <u>increase</u> the entrance age for the first grade for the fall of 1961. This means the change for entrance age requirements would make an <u>increase</u> of one or more months.

*See Appendix I

Of the total 435 districts responding, 30 districts or 7 per cent indicated an early admissions policy. Where such a policy did exist a psychological examination, usually at the expense of the parents, plus judgements on the social and physical maturity of the child were required.

The above-mentioned report included three conclusions concerning the data involved. In summary they read as follows:

1. There was a definite trend toward a required admissions age by September 1 of five years for kindergarten and six years for first grade.

2. Too few schools have provision for early admission of children with superior intellectual capacities.

3. Districts having such a policy are found mainly in the larger population areas where there is no dearth of available psychological services, and where there is a large enough concentration of children of this age and ability level to warrant the adoption of such a policy.

The report also made two significant recommendations. They are quoted here:

1. "That each school district study the problems involved in early admission and adopt a local policy that will permit early admission of qualified pupils regardless of presently specified age for admission."

2. "That the local school district after screening of applicants assume the cost for psychological testing in all cases where the cost of such testing might discourage the parents of potentially qualified children."

Some time before this report was published, three members of the State Department of Education--Dr. John E. Bicknell, Director of Research; Mr. Roy H. Larson, Director of Elementary Education; and Mrs. Mary M. Pilch, Consultant For The Education of The Gifted--had concluded that their own concern and that of many state educators strongly indicated some constructive action was needed to encourage more communities to adapt a flexible early admissions policy. They anticipated this action might comprise the following procedures:

1. Establish a committee composed of educators familiar with the problems of early admissions as well as the problems common to local Minnesota school communities.

2. Develop criteria for an early admissions program.

3. Propose recommendations and procedures which could be used as guidelines by local communities interested in implementing an early admissions program.

The first meeting of such a committee was called in January 1961, one month before the aforementioned State Department of Education report was published.

Related Research Evidence

The term "acceleration" has come to mean any process in the educational program in which criteria other than chronological age are used for determining the educational advancement of the individual. Acceleration may be considered to be a way of encouraging very able students to use their school time more effectively. It does not necessarily mean spending less time in school, although this approach to meeting the needs of some outstanding students is advocated by some authorities and is practiced at all levels in some schools. It may mean providing advanced subject matter at an earlier time than normally prescribed, or it may mean shortening the time spent in study at a given level. In nearly all cases where acceleration practices have been researched, favorable findings have characterized the reports with respect to both short and long range effects [1,2,9,10,12,13 and 18].

Acceleration through early admission to school finds support in many of the studies. Hobson [9,10] made a longitudinal study of bright children covering the years 1932, 1948 and 1956. Some of the subjects of this study were as young as three years eight months at the time of entrance into kindergarten. He found the students in his study showed academic improvement all through school and they participated as frequently as others in the co-curricular activities. This was especially true at the high school level. They were apparently no different from their classmates in the social, elective, or athletic positions they achieved. Significantly, more of the early entrants were admitted to college.

Worcester's [18] report is on a number of related investigations made by several of his students on early kindergarten entrants in Nebraska in the years 1951 through 1955. In general, the results indicated the younger entrants, when compared with their classmates, received equal or higher marks as well as achieved equal or higher ratings on their social, emotional and physical adjustment. There was no evidence to suggest that waiting one year would have benefited them. Results from the over-all study strongly supported the generalization that it is to the advantage of mentally advanced children to enter school at a younger age.

Worcester [18] summarizes the potential of early admission as supported by research in the following quoted manner:

1. Early entrance has the advantage of any other form of acceleration in that it saves a year of the pupil's life. If there be no further acceleration, the child has the regular number of years of education with all the possibilities of enrichment and still can enter college and,

after that, post-college training at an earlier age. For very many of these bright children, the extra year will be spent in advanced education in order to prepare for the exceedingly complex tasks of the professions, technology, business and government.

2. The child will be placed from the beginning with those more nearly his mental and social equal and will, therefore, be less likely to develop habits of dawdling and laziness.

3. His education will be directed. In some homes, to be sure, the mentally ready child who has to 'sit and wait' will have the advantage of enlightened home training. For many it will be haphazard.

4. The problem of skipping material in the curriculum is obviated.

5. Teachers are made more aware of the particular needs of bright children by recognizing them at the beginning of their school careers.

6. The school system as a whole becomes sensitive to the problem of the gifted.

Work of the Early Admissions Program Committee

A small committee representing seven communities first met in January 1961.* The purpose of their first several meetings was to discuss the feasibility of planning for a cooperative program of experimentation with varying entrance ages into kindergarten and with varying types of kindergarten programs.

The committee accepted the documented evidence of research and at no time advocated early admissions as a form of acceleration which would encourage curtailment by any standards, in the total educational program of the mentally gifted. The Nebraska studies were reviewed as well as the early admissions practices employed by some of the schools represented on the committee. From these early discussions, certain conclusions were drawn, usually with unanimous acceptance. These accepted conclusions helped to establish the frame of reference for the agenda at subsequent meetings. In summary, these conclusions were as follows:

1. There were already in some public schools in the state a few early admittees each year. Generally, they had continued to make satisfactory adjustments throughout the elementary school.

2. Evidence indicated these early admittees generally possessed I.Q.'s of 130 or above.

*Excelsior, Northfield, Osseo, Robbinsdale, Rochester, Roseville, Wayzata.

3. A mental age measure was considered to be a more effective indicator of "readiness" than the I.Q. score.

4. There was no evidence of any marked variation in the content of the kindergarten program either in the local schools practicing an early admissions program, or in the research studies reviewed by the committee. Therefore, this aspect of the problem would not be considered in any proposals made by the committee. This was a concern which the committee felt belonged to the local schools when reviewing and evaluating their own total elementary school curriculum.

5. No significant account was taken of sex differences either in the local schools practicing early admissions or in the research reviewed by the committee. Therefore, this factor would not be a concern of the committee when making recommendations.

These conclusions helped the committee determine which factors they wished to consider as relevant variables in making recommendations concerning the identification of potential early admittees. Unanimous agreement was finally reached on the following variables:

1. Chronological age,
2. Mental age,
3. Physical development and muscular coordination,
4. Emotional stability, and
5. The child's attitude toward school and toward learning in general.

At this stage of their discussion, the group decided to invite more communities to join the committee. This was to assure a broader base of opinions for making specific recommendations and for gathering sample evidence to include in this report. Five more communities were invited*, increasing the number from seven to twelve.

By November 1961, the committee was ready to decide on the feasibility of creating a research experiment (see the first paragraph of this section). Dr. Bicknell was asked to prepare a sample research design.** At the same time, the Rochester representatives were asked to present to the committee the proposal for an early admissions program which they had prepared for presentation to their school board. The committee thus became involved in a depth discussion on evaluation at two levels: research and administration. A shift in the discussion was thus made from an emphasis on the individual child and his needs to two other areas of involvement:

*Edina-Morningside, Golden Valley, Owatonna, St. Louis Park, Stillwater (see Appendix II)

**See Appendix III

(1) the kinds of workable and meaningful evaluation techniques they could recommend for the smaller communities which make up the majority of school districts in our state, and (2) the administrative responsibilities of the school and the community in an early admissions program. The discussion resulted in accepting certain areas of concern which had to be taken into account when recommendations were made. These have been incorporated in both the recommendations and the content of the sample forms of Appendixes IV through IX. These areas are as follows:

1. The status of the availability of trained personnel in public schools to help make judgements as to who should be admitted early.

2. The general pattern of the testing program in most public elementary schools in the state.

3. The evidence that our public school administrators tend to increase entrance age dates and that this attitude appears to lean toward greater rigidity rather than greater flexibility.

4. The public relations problem is a sensitive one regarding both identification and policy making.

5. The placement of responsibility for making final judgements concerning potential enrollees. Coupled with this is the problem of how the skills for making such judgements shall be developed when there is no trained personnel available.

6. The socio-economic factors of the home, school, and community which can hinder or help the establishment of an early admissions policy.

One year after the committee meetings got underway, the following decisions were made:

1. The original idea of considering a research experiment which would include all twelve communities and involve the need for using control groups was abandoned. The proposed design and its extensive needs were considered to be too involved and expensive.

2. Internal problems such as the following were considered to be decisions best left to the local school authorities.

    a. Grouping arrangements,

    b. Implementation of new instructional techniques in the kindergarten,

    c. Introduction of basic reading and elementary mathematics skills in the kindergarten,

d. Evaluation of existing kindergarten programs,

e. The I.Q. cut-off point for eligibility, and

f. Acceleration into first grade before completing a year of kindergarten.

These issues were therefore not included in committee recommendations; however, their importance as matters for local concern were strongly emphasized.

3. The committee decided it could best serve the state by providing sample materials helpful to interested communities wanting to start an early admissions program. Included in this sampling would be the following forms:

a. FORM A - An initial letter form to the parents who want their child to be considered for early admission.

b. FORM B - A form for parents to complete regarding the readiness of the child.

c. FORM C - A suggested (structured) procedure for interviewing the parents.

d. FORM D - A pupil evaluation form for the interviewer.

e. FORM E - Two evaluation forms of the child's progress after admission; (1) at the end of the first six weeks, and (2) at the end of the kindergarten experience.

Recommendations were made for the content in each of these forms, samples of which can be found in the Appendixes. Schools are urged to consider their adaptability. The committee strongly recommends these as minimum considerations.

FORM A*

An initial letter form for the parents which should include the following information:

a. The school policy on early admission (This should also reflect the philosophy of the school.).

b. A statement on eligibility as related to the chronological age determined by local school policy.

c. A statement on the general characteristics of the type of child considered eligible.

*See Appendix IV

d. The procedure for getting application blanks and other essential preliminary forms.

e. The signature of the person making the final decision concerning the eligibility of the child.

FORM B*

A questionnaire for parents to complete regarding the readiness of the child. It should include the following:

a. Vineland Social Maturity Scale type items on maturity factors.

b. Check lists of the child's play activities, emotional and physical health, size, unique accomplishments, and status of his responsibilities.

c. Parents' reasons for wanting the child to enter school early.

NOTE: The committee recommends that no question should be asked about the child's ability to read and write.

FORM C**

The procedure for the interviewer. It should include the following:

a. Observations he made on these facts: general health of the child, speech defects or other obvious physical defects, parental control of the child's behavior during the interview, the child's dependence on the parent, and the general behavior of the child.

b. An explanation of the testing procedure (structured for the parents to follow).

FORM D***

The form for the interviewer to record the facts about the child. It should include all items covered by the interviewer as noted in FORM C above.

FORMS E-1 to E-4****

The forms for noting individual progress should include four kinds of evaluation evidence.

*See Appendix V
**See Appendix VI
***See Appendix VII
****See Appendix VIII

E-1 An evaluation of the first six-week period in the kindergarten.

E-2 An evaluation in the spring of the kindergarten year.

E-3 An evaluation by the parents in the spring of the kindergarten year.

E-4 A sequential evaluation for grades beyond the kindergarten.

The committee recommends the following items be considered in the content of each evaluation procedure in this series:

E-1 At the end of the first six weeks in the kindergarten the teacher prepares the following:

a. Statements customarily used for making subjective judgements to note the progress for all kindergarten children in her class.

b. A check list of items taken from the school's cumulative record form.

E-2 In the spring of the kindergarten year the school evaluates the student's progress. The procedures recommended are:

a. Statement of teacher's judgement on the reading readiness of the child.

b. Results from the Metropolitan Reading Readiness Test using first grade norms.

c. Katherine Banham Maturity Check List. This individual check list should be ready for the teacher by late fall so that she can check each child's list as she notes evidence of readiness during the winter and spring period.

d. Results from the SRA Reading Readiness Test. (Early admittee rated on local, state and national norms by qualified persons).

Note: The committee seriously questioned the validity of results obtained by administering any standardized group intelligence test at this age level.

E-3 In the spring of the kindergarten year an evaluation should be made by the parents via unstructured comments which include the following:

a. Their evaluation of the school's program for early admissions.

b. Their evaluation of the school's procedure for early admissions.

c. Their evaluation of the child's progress as an early admittee.

d. Their own additional relevant comments.

E-4 For a sequential record of individual progress beyond the kindergarten, the evaluation should include tests such as the following:

a. The Gates Primary Reading Test given in the spring of Grades 1 and 2. (Use the same form for early admittees as is used for all others.)

b. The Stroud Reading Ability Test given in the fall of Grade 2.

c. The Iowa Basic Skills Test given in the fall of Grades 3, 4, 5 and 6.

The committee made additional suggestions for other kinds of evaluation which communities might want to consider. These suggestions could be adapted by individual communities or carried out jointly by a group of communities. They are included here to help arouse interest to start action in the state.

The individual school might keep careful records <u>each time</u> measuring instruments are used for early admittees as well as for those admitted in normal procedures <u>who could have been</u> early admittees the year before. Evidence on the progress of these matched groups could then be reported to Mrs. Mary M. Pilch in the State Department of Education who would assure state-wide distribution of the report.

For group action, the committee suggests that several communities jointly cooperate in a pre-determined testing program. Such a group could use a set of commonly accepted techniques, procedures, and materials. They could organize their findings collectively <u>each time</u> measuring instruments are used, reporting test results of their early admittees, of those in normal admission procedures <u>who could have been</u> early admittees the year before, and the total class results. Such evidence could also be given state-wide distribution. The committee considered these data to be very meaningful for promoting early admissions programs in the state.

A final comment is in order. In a summary report on information gathered by the Division of Instruction and published in a State Department of Education report dated May 1962, a question was asked about early admissions; namely, "Does Your District Have A Policy Which Permits Early Admission of Children Who Have Acquired Maturity But Are Younger Than The Local Entrance Age?" The tabulation of replies is noted.

Yes	-	43
No	-	357
No reply	-	7
Total		407

Conclusion

Research evidence leaves little doubt that early admission to the school program is beneficial to the mentally advanced student. The committee urges public school leaders in the state to seriously consider its recommendations for an early admissions program as one means of accommodating these mentally advanced students.

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APPENDIX I

Survey of Entrance Age Requirements

A questionnaire was mailed in January to all superintendents of graded elementary and secondary school districts in Minnesota requesting information on local entrance age requirements for kindergarten and first grade. Four hundred thirty-five superintendents returned the questionnaire and the returns represent about 97 per cent of these districts.

Of the responding districts 243 or 56 per cent operated kindergartens. Spring primary classes were not included in the tabulation which follows:

1960-61 Kindergarten Entrance Age

Local Requirement	Number of Districts	Percentage of Districts
1. 5 years before September 1	6	2.5%
2. 5 years between September 1-30	81	33.3%
3. 5 years between October 1-31	67	27.6%
4. 5 years between November 1-30	24	9.9%
5. 5 years between December 1-31	65	26.7%
	243	100.0%

The preceding tabulation shows that nearly 36 per cent of these districts now require that a child be five years of age before October 1 for entrance to kindergarten.

In addition, 77 districts or about 32 per cent indicated that their school boards have already taken action to increase the entrance age for the fall of 1961. In most cases the change represents a one-month increase in entrance age.

1960-61 First Grade Entrance Age

Four hundred thirty graded elementary and secondary school districts supplied usable information and this is tabulated as follows:

Local Requirement	Number of Districts	Percentage of Districts
1. 6 years before September 1	8	1.9%
2. 6 years between September 1-30	106	24.6%
3. 6 years between October 1-31	98	22.8%
4. 6 years between November 1-30	43	10.0%
5. 6 years between December 1-31	175	40.7%
	430	100.0%

The preceding tabulation shows that 26.5 per cent of these districts now require that a child be six years of age before October 1 for entrance to the first grade. On the other hand, 40.7 per cent of the districts still permit a child to enter first grade if his birth date is during December.

However, 130 districts or 30 per cent of the responding districts indicated that their school boards have taken action to increase the entrance age for the fall of 1961. In most cases the change represents an increase of one month in entrance age.

Early Admission Policies

Thirty responding districts or 7 per cent indicated that they have an early admission policy and 396 districts or 91 per cent indicated that they do not have such a policy.

In most cases where early admission was permitted, a psychological examination at the parents' expense was required. Social and physical maturity were other factors frequently mentioned. A few schools administered reading tests to applicants for early admissions.

Conclusions

There is a very definite trend toward five years of age by September 1 for admission to kindergarten and six years of age by September 1 for admission to first grade. The trend is more pronounced at present for kindergarten pupils.

Too few schools have provision for early admission of suitable children. However, the 7 per cent of districts with such a policy represent a much higher percentage of the pupils as such policies are found mainly in the larger population centers.

The dearth of psychological testing centers and trained psychologists appears to be the chief problem in establishing a policy for early admission. The only testing centers mentioned specifically were at the University of Minnesota and St. Cloud State College. Only a small number of schools have trained psychologists on their staff.

Recommendations

1. That each school district study the problems involved in early admission and adopt a local policy that will permit early admission of qualified pupils regardless of presently specified age for admission.

2. That the local school district after screening of applicants assume the cost for psychological testing in all cases where the cost of such testing might discourage the parents of potentially qualified children.

Appendix II

PROPOSAL FOR A RESEARCH DESIGN

COMMITTEE ON EARLY ADMISSIONS

Submitted by
Dr. John E. Bicknell

I. Identification Procedures

A. Criteria
1. C.A. minimum (several levels)
2. M.A. minimum (several levels)
3. Social Maturity
a. Determined by VINELAND SOCIAL MATURITY SCALE.
4. Physical Maturity
a. Determined by SUBJECTIVE JUDGEMENT.

B. Orientation Process
1. School will send a letter to eligible parents. (list obtained from census reports of pre-school children.)
a. The letter will tell
(1) Why test?
(2) Description of tests chosen.
(3) Where to have the child tested.
(4) When testing must be done.
(5) Why the school(s) are "experimenting".
(6) Why the school(s) are researching the project.
b. Requirements for consideration of the child.
(1) youngster whose 4th birthday will fall between January 1 and September 1 of the year he is to be considered for admittance

AND

(2) has a mental age of at least 60 months

AND

(3) has a Vineland score which is indicative of the social maturity of a child at least 4.6 C.A.

AND

(4) subjective judgement indicates good physical coordination and adjustments. This decision is to be determined by two factors; are early admittees to go into a regular kindergarten? or, will they go into a special kinder-garten grouping?

2. Interviews
   a. Conducted after letter is sent to parents and testing of child is completed. Material and relevant information about child's potential has been studied by the interviewer.

   b. Procedure for the interview <u>is structured</u>.
      (1) To avoid biases and variability of personality factor of the interviewer(s).
      (2) To tell all parents about the test results whether or not the child is eligible on the basis of evidence.
      (3) To tell those parents whose children were eligible: what this means in the plan of the experiment; to decide if they are willing for the child to be in the experiment; what it would mean if their child was admitted into the experiment as a control due to the random selection technique.

3. The community school(s) will have determined their procedure concerning the grouping policy for admittance. Possible choices will be:
   a. Scatter the early-admittees through the regularly scheduled kindergarten classes.

   b. Create special kindergarten grouping ((2) and (3) below would require a special curriculum created by a curriculum content committee. This work would involve, among other things, accounting for unique opportunities to develop creativity).
      (1) Take the regularly prescribed kindergarten program.
      (2) Take a specially designed program starting in the kindergarten and continuing through at least grade 3.
      (3) Take a program as part of an ungraded primary situation (K-3 inc.).

II. Evaluation Procedures

A. Testing Schedule
   1. Reading readiness test at the end of the kindergarten experience.

2. Achievement testing at the <u>beginning</u> <u>and</u> <u>end</u> of each succeeding year which the experiment encompasses.
3. Vineland Social Maturity Scale to be repeated at <u>each</u> testing period (beginning and end of each year) to determine social maturation.
4. Creativity tests.

B. Application of appropriate analysis to determine:
   1. Appropriate combination of levels of identification criteria.
   2. Most productive grouping technique for such youngsters.
   3. Whether the regular curriculum or a special curriculum is a better way of responding to their educational needs.

C. Follow-up Program
   1. Grades 4-9 should be considered.
   2. Possibly through high school years-although this presently appears to be perhaps too long-range in the planning. Attrition factor still too unknown to make positive recommendations as to how long-range the study shall be. Certainly, through Grade 8 should be considered a possibility.

Appendix III

SAMPLE FORM A

Sample submitted by Edina-Morningside Public Schools

Dear Parents:

According to the rules of the Board of Education, children are eligible to enter kindergarten if their fifth birthday falls on or before the first of September. We realize that regardless of the date selected, some younger children may be ready and some older children may not be ready for kindergarten activities. Therefore, the Board of Education has made it possible for some younger children to enter kindergarten early.

It will be possible for some exceptional children whose fifth birthday falls between September 2 and November 30 inclusive to enter kindergarten this fall. These children will be placed in competition with children up to fifteen months older. The school does not believe that it is to a child's advantage to enter school early unless we can predict that he can compete favorably with older children.

If you feel that your child's total development is superior to most children of his age and feel that he can compete with older children we will consider him for early kindergarten entrance. In general, we will consider children who are physically healthy, well coordinated, emotionally mature, socially well adjusted, and with mental ability of a high order. We expect these children to speak plainly, to express themselves well, and to be sufficiently outgoing to compete with older children.

If you believe that your child has superior mental ability and maturity and if you wish that he be considered for early admission, fill in the attached form and return it to an elementary principal by June 1. An elementary principal will call you and arrange an interview for you and your child. After the interview if the principal feels that a child should be considered for early entrance, he will arrange for an individual psychological examination to verify your feelings about your child's mental ability.

The procedure of interviewing and testing is intended to protect some children from entering into excessive competition. No child will be admitted unless we can predict that he will be above average intellectually and socially even with older children. We do not want potentially good students to be pushed to the lower part of the class by older children.

May we suggest caution in preparing children for interviews and testing. We are in no way responsible for promises you make to your child. Please don't tell him that he will go to school this fall or that he can go if he "passes" the test. Just bring him to school for a visit and we will motivate him to do his very best.

HERBERT E. HARTSHORN
Director of Elementary Education

Sample submitted by Osseo, Ind. School Dist. #279

Dear Parents:

According to the rules of the Board of Education, a child is eligible to enter kindergarten if he is five years old by September 1. Knowing that some children are ready for school activities before others of the same age, the Board of Education has made it possible for some children to enter kindergarten before their fifth birthday.

Exceptional children who will be five by January 1, 1963, may be allowed to enter kindergarten in September, 1962. These children will be placed in competition with children up to sixteen months older. The school does not believe it is to the child's advantage to enter school early unless we can predict that he can compete favorably with older children.

If you believe that your child is superior to other children of the same age in physical, social and emotional development and has superior mental ability, we will consider him for early kindergarten entrance.

If you wish to have your child considered for early admission, complete the attached application and return it to the principal of the elementary school which your child would attend if admitted. Upon receipt of the completed application, the principal will call you to arrange an interview. If, after talking with you and your child, it appears that the child is a likely candidate for early admission, arrangements will be made for an individual psychological examination at district expense.

The procedure of interviewing and testing is intended to protect some children from entering into excessive competition. We do not want potentially good students to be pushed into the lower part of the class by older children. Therefore, no child will be admitted unless we can predict that he will have better than average success in school even when competing with older children.

May we suggest caution in preparing children for interviews and testing. Please do not tell him that he will go to school this fall or that he can go if he "passes" the test. Just bring him to school for a visit and we will motivate him to do his very best.

Your application form may be sent to any one of the following:

Mr. Joseph Elliott, Principal
Garden City Elementary School
6400 Osseo Road
Minneapolis 22, Minnesota

Mr. Ralph Braun, Principal
Osseo Elementary School
324 Sixth Avenue N.E.
Osseo, Minnesota

Mr. Donald Gillquist, Principal
Willow Lane Elementary School
7020 Perry Avenue North
Minneapolis 22, Minnesota

Mr. Marvin Norman, Principal
Crest View Elementary School
8200 Zane Avenue North
Minneapolis 29, Minnesota

Mr. Rodney Felber, Principal
Park Brook Elementary School
7400 Hampshire Avenue North
Minneapolis 27, Minnesota

Mr. Douglas Rossi, Principal
Edgewood Elementary School
6601 Xylon Avenue North
Minneapolis 27, Minnesota

Applications should be submitted by May 15. They will be processed on a first come, first served basis.

Sincerely,

Zyrle D. Roser
Director of Elementary Education

Sample submitted by St. Louis Park Public Schools

Dear Parents:

A child must be five years of age before September 1 to be eligible for kindergarten. Although chronological age is probably the best single factor to determine eligibility for admission, some younger children may be ready for kindergarten. Consequently, a School Board policy makes it possible for some exceptional children to enter kindergarten early.

Children who will be five years of age during September, October, or November may be considered for early admission. They may be competing in school with children who are fifteen months older than they. The school does not believe it is wise to admit a child to school early unless he can work with more mature pupils.

If you feel that your child's total development is superior to most children of his age and feel that he can compete with older children, you may apply for early entrance for him. In general, children who are healthy, well-coordinated, emotionally mature, socially well-adjusted, and above average in intelligence will be considered. These children must speak plainly, express themselves well, and be sufficiently outgoing to associate with older children.

If you feel that your child is exceptional, complete the attached form and give it to the elementary principal before May 15 with the child's birth certificate. A school district psychologist will administer a series of tests to the child in your home. You will be contacted for an appointment for the testing.

Caution in preparing a youngster for interviews and testing is suggested. Please don't promise a child that he will go to school this fall or that he can go if he "passes" the test.

The District #283 school psychologist shall determine whether or not applicants for early admission meet the following standards:

- Stanford-Binet I.Q. of at least 130, 135, and 140 for children born in September, October, and November respectively.
- Superior social maturity on the Vineland Social Maturity Scale or an equivalent scale.
- Superior coordination and size.
- Independence, ability to relate in a test situation, and willingness to follow directions.
- Intellectual curiosity, interest in kindergarten-type activities, and superior attention span.
- Ability to articulate clearly and use words skillfully.

The procedure for determining those eligible for early entrance includes these steps:

- The school psychologist shall notify the Director of Elementary Education of her recommendation of each child tested.

- The Director of Elementary Education shall discuss each case with the school psychologist and then make the final decision for admittance or rejection. This decision must be accepted by the parents as final.

- The Director of Elementary Education shall notify the parent of the decision by letter.

Sincerely yours,

Frances Blake
Director of Elementary Education

TESTING PROGRAM FOR EARLY ADMISSION TO KINDERGARTEN IN ST. LOUIS PARK PUBLIC SCHOOLS

March 20, 1961

I. General Admittance Requirements

A. Children in St. Louis Park shall be at least 5 years of age prior to September 1 of the school year in which they are admitted to kindergarten, and 6 years of age prior to September 1 of the school year in which they are admitted to first grade except as the Director of Elementary Education permits early admission of exceptionally mature and gifted children on the basis of a testing program.

B. The Director of Elementary Education may permit early admission of children born in September, October, and November of the school year upon the recommendation of a District #283 school psychologist.

1. Procedures for such admittance shall include:

a. Public notification to all parents of children in this age bracket regarding this program.

b. Elementary principals shall receive all applications for early admission by May 15th. They shall counsel with parents and refer children to the school psychologists for appraisal. Persons moving into St. Louis Park between May 15 and September 1st may make an application to the Director of Elementary Education.

c. The School Psychologist shall make an appointment for the child and the parent for the interview and the administration of the tests within a time limit specified by the Director of Elementary Education.

d. The cost of the program shall be borne by the School District.

e. The District #283 school psychologists shall determine whether or not applicants for early admission meet the following standards:

1. Stanford-Binet I.Q. of at least 130, 135, and 140 for children born in September, October, and November respectively.

2. Superior social maturity on the Vineland Social Maturity Scale or an equivalent scale.

3. Superior coordination and size.

4. Independence, ability to relate in a test situation, and willingness to follow directions.

5. Intellectual curiosity, interest in kindergarten-type activities, and superior attention span.

6. Ability to articulate clearly and use words skillfully.

f. Results

1. The School Psychologist shall notify the Director of Elementary Education of her recommendation of each child tested.

2. The Director of Elementary Education shall discuss each case with the School Psychologist and then make the final decision for admittance, or rejection. This decision must be accepted by the parents as final.

3. The Director of Elementary Education shall notify the parent of the decision by letter.

Sample submitted by Stillwater, Independent School District #834

Dear Parents:

By ruling of the Board of Education, children are eligible to enroll in kindergarten if they are five years old before the first of September. No matter what date is selected, it is recognized that some younger children may be ready and some older children may not be ready for kindergarten activities. In order to provide for these children who are ready, the Board of Education has made it possible for some of them to enter school early.

These early entrants will be placed in competition with children up to sixteen months older. It is felt that it is not to a child's advantage to enter school early unless it can be predicted that he can compete successfully with older children. Good physical health, emotional maturity, good social adjustment and superior intelligence are factors which will be noted in making an evaluation for school entrance under this program.

The first step in determining if this is best for your child is for you to complete and return the enclosed questionnaire to which you have attached a birth certificate. This certificate will be returned to you. Discuss the questions as completely as you can. After you have returned the completed forms to the elementary counselor, an appointment will be made for an interview with you and the child at your home. Dependent upon the results of the questionnaire and the interview, a recommendation will be made as to whether psychological testing by a certified psychologist is in order. The fee for this will be $15.00. In hardship cases this fee may be waived.

Results and information from the interview and testing will be coordinated in determining the best planning for your child in our school. This procedure of interviewing and testing is intended to verify your opinion that your child is exceptional and that it is best for your child to enter school early. No child will be admitted unless it can be predicted that he is intellectually superior and socially competent with older children. It would not be fair to have potentially good students pushed to the lower part of the class by the older children. The final decision for determining entrance will rest with the school personnel.

Please call the elementary counselor at HE 9-5160 if you have any questions about this policy.

Sincerely yours,

GARLD J. SMITH
Administrative Assistant

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Appendix IV

SAMPLE FORM B

Sample submitted by Edina-Morningside Public Schools

Child's Name_____Date of birth_____

Parent's Name_____Phone Number_____

Address_____

1. Is your child able to dress himself completely except for tying his shoes?_____Including tying his shoes?_____
   Can he dress himself in winter clothing?_____

2. At what age was his last toilet "accident"?____years____months

3. Please estimate the number of days of school he would have missed last year because of illness. _____days.

4. What are his favorite play activities with other children?

5. What does he like to do with his parents?

6. Does he prefer to play
   _____alone
   _____with one or two children
   _____with a group of children (check one)

7. How many of his playmates are
   _____already in school
   _____entering kindergarten this fall
   _____still too young for school (answer with a number)

8. Is he large, average, or small for his age?

9. What stories has he particularly enjoyed?

10. What are his favorite TV programs?

11. What responsibilities does he have around the house?

12. Please describe any unusual interests or accomplishments that lead you to believe that he has superior mental ability.

13. Please state your reasons for wanting your child to enter kindergarten early.

Signed_____
Person who fills out questionnaire

Date_____

Attach a birth certificate to this application and return it to your elementary school principal by June 1. You may keep the cover letter if you wish.

Sample submitted by Osseo, Independent School District #279

Child's Name_____ Sex_____ Birthdate_____
Father's Name_____ Mother's Name_____
Father's Occupation_____ Mother's Occupation_____
Address_____ Telephone_____

Siblings: Give name, sex, and age of each.

_____ ___ ___ _____ ___ ___
_____ ___ ___ _____ ___ ___

1. Height of the child is:below average___average___above average___

2. Weight of the child is:below average___average___above average___

3. His general health is: below average___average___above average___

4. At what age did he learn to walk by himself?_____

5. At what age did he begin to talk in clearly understood phrases?
_____

6. At what age was his last toilet "accident"?_____years_____months

7. To what extent does he dress himself? (buttons, tying, winter clothing, etc.)_____

8. What are his favorite play activities with other children?_____
_____

9. Does he prefer to play -
_____alone)
_____with one or two children) check one
_____with a group of children)

10. How many of his playmates are -
_____already in school)answer
_____eligible for kindergarten this fall)with a
_____still too young for school)number

11.. Has he attended Sunday School or Nursery School?_____If so, what has been his reaction to the experience?_____
_____

12. Please describe unusual interests or accomplishments that lead you to believe he has mental ability?_____
_____

13. Please state your reasons for wanting your child to enter kindergarten early?_____

Signed_____
Person filling out questionnaire
Date_____

Sample submitted by St. Louis Park Public Schools

Application for Testing Program for Early Admission to Kindergarten, for Exceptional Children

1. Name of Child_____

2. Address_____Telephone Number_____

3. Birthdate of Child_____*Verification_____

4. What are his favorite play activities with other children?

5. What does he like to do with his parents?

6. Is he large, average, or small for his age?

7. Please describe any unusual interests or achievements that lead you to believe the child is superior.

8. Please state your reasons for wanting the child to enter kindergarten early.

It is understood that this testing will be done by the St. Louis Park Public School psychologists and that the decision of the school regarding acceptance of a child must be final.

_____ _____

Date Signature of Parent

PLEASE RETURN THIS TO THE PRINCIPAL BEFORE MAY 15, 1962

*Indicate by code "B.C." at the time verification is made from the birth certificate. The principal is asked to initial when he acknowledges the verification.

Sample submitted by Stillwater, Independent School District #834

Child's Name_____ Verified date of birth_____
Parent's Name_____ Phone Number_____
Address_____ School area_____

1. List names and birthdates of brothers and sisters.

2. Is this child able to dress himself completely except for tying his shoes?_____Including tying his shoes?_____Can he dress himself in winter clothing?_____

3. At what age: did he walk?_____did he talk?_____was he toilet trained?_____

4. (Check one) Does your child prefer to play _____alone, _____with one or two other children, _____with a group of children?

5. (Answer with a number) How many of his playmates are _____already in school; _____entering kindergarten this fall; _____still too young for school?

6. What are his favorite play activities with other children?

7. What stories has he particularly enjoyed?

8. What are his favorite television programs?

9. How active a part does child take in family activities? What are these activities?

10. Are there any limitations to physical activities? If so, state reasons why.

11. Is child large, average, or small for his age?

12. Has the child had school experience, such as Sunday School, nursery school, etc.?

13. Please describe any unusual interests or accomplishments that lead you to believe that he has superior mental ability?

14. Please state the reasons why you wish your child to enter kindergarten early. Be very explicit.

Signed_____

Date_____

To be given consideration this must be returned by June 20 with a birth certificate attached to William Engler, elementary counselor, School District #834, Stillwater.

Appendix V

SAMPLE FORM C

Sample submitted by Edina-Morningside Public Schools

I. INTERVIEWING PROCEDURE

The interview will have three phases:

1. Obtaining facts from the parents in the presence of the child.
2. Allowing the child to express himself in the presence of his parents.
3. Interpretation of policy to the parents not in the presence of the child. During this time we will ask the child to draw a picture of his home and family in the outer office.

During the first part of the interview the principal will refer to the questionnaire and discuss or ask for additional information about health, toilet training, handling clothing, play activities, unusual accomplishments, etc. He may obtain this information from either the parent or the child.

The principal should use one or more pictures and ask the child about it. He might begin with open ended questions such as "Tell me about the picture" or "Tell me a story about this picture". If the questions do not elicit the desired responses, the principal can ask more specific questions. The principal may choose any book or set of pictures that he feels will make children respond. The purpose of questioning about pictures is to obtain answers to the following questions:

1. Does the child have understandable speech?
2. Does he express himself well?
3. Does he seem to be alert, to have high intelligence?
4. What is his manner of responses? Is he shy, alert, aggressive, outgoing, etc.

During the entire interview the principal should take note of the following:

1. The child's general behavior.
2. The parents' control over the child's behavior.
3. The child's dependence upon his parents.
4. The child's behavior upon leaving his parents to draw a picture in the outer office.

When the child is out of the room the principal should:

1. Interpret to the parents our philosophy of early entrance. This philosophy has been stated in the letter accompanying the questionnaire but may need repetition.
2. Return the birth certificate. (At some point in the interview).

3. Inform the parents that all placements are trial placements.
4. Handle all matters that are best done without the child present.
5. Inform the parents that you will consider all information gained through the questionnaire, observation, and the interview and explain how and when they will know if the child will be tested or is considered not ready for kindergarten.
6. Parents should not be informed during the interview whether or not their child "passed". An exception can be made only when both principal and parents agree that the child should not enter kindergarten early.

II. AFTER THE INTERVIEW

Principals should write up the interview immediately afterward. A blank has been provided for this purpose both to organize the write-ups and to promote uniformity. Part of this may be filled in during the interview. Interviews must be written up immediately before one forgets or confuses information obtained in several interviews. It is especially important to indicate the reason a child was not considered acceptable for early entrance.

The principal has two possible decisions to make:

1. This child is not the superior child who can profit from early entrance to kindergarten.

2. This child seems able to compete with older children and I will recommend him for early entrance to kindergarten if the psychologist finds that he has the necessary mental ability.

After making one of these decisions the principal will make his decision known to the parents by form letter.

Appendix VI

SAMPLE FORM D

Sample submitted by Edina-Morningside Public Schools

Pupil Evaluation Form By Interviewer

Child's name_____ Date_____

Health, Physical defects

Ability to express self

Estimated level of ability

Speech problem

Shy, outgoing, aggressive, etc.

Dependence upon parents

General behavior

Parental control of behavior

Additional information

Procedures explained:
- Philosophy
- Trial placement
- Psychological examination

Parental attitude toward school

Principal's decision:

_____ Not ready for kindergarten
_____ Scheduled for psychological examination

Reason for rejection

Sample submitted by Osseo, Independent School District #279

Early Admission Interview Guide

Child's Name_____ Date_____

1. Check birth certificate
2. Why do the parents wish to enter the child in kindergarten this year? What do they see as the advantages of early admission in terms of the child's future?
3. In what way has the child expressed an interest in going to school?
4. Has the child attended Sunday School or Nursery School? If so, what has been his reaction to it?
5. How often is the child left with others for an hour or more?
6. Does the child seem to be relatively independent for his age?
7. Is his speech well developed?
   Sentences complete?
   Is he imaginative or creative?
   Does he notice details?
8. How well does he know his colors?
9. How well does he count?
10. Does he know what his father does for a living?
11. What does he know about his siblings (age, grade, games they play together)?
12. Does he know how to print or write any letters or numbers?
13. What is your general impression of the child's readiness for kindergarten? Any limitations?
14. Should this child be tested?

Appendix VII

SAMPLE FORM E-1

Sample submitted by Stillwater, Independent School District #834

KINDERGARTEN TEACHER EVALUATION FORM

First Six-Week Period

To: , kindergarten teacher

Re: Early entrance to kindergarten

Students:

From: William J. Engler, elementary counselor

Date: 10-9-61

To help formulate a frame of reference on the early entrance to kindergarten program, I need your help in evaluating the early entrants in terms of their present adjustment to the school situation. Please discuss as completely as possible your opinions in the following areas. Please use a separate sheet of paper for each child.

A. General attitude toward school.

B. Socialization with the other children.

C. Willingness to participate in teacher-directed activities.

D. Self-reliance and independence.

E. General prognosis of readiness for first grade by the end of the year. How does this child compare with other children in the class?

F. Interest of the parents: how much contact, how many times, on what matters?

G. Your opinion of this program at the present time. Do you think it is worthwhile?

SAMPLE FORM E-2

Sample submitted by Edina-Morningside Public Schools

REPORT TO FIRST GRADE ON KINDERGARTEN CHILD'S ADJUSTMENT

Name_____ Address_____

Date of Birth_____School_____Teacher_____

Physical Development (Check all that apply)

1. Vision
   _____Apparently normal
   _____Defect (describe)

2. Hearing
   _____Apparently normal
   _____Defect (describe)

3. Speech
   _____Has no speech defect
   _____Immature speech development
   _____Has a severe speech defect

4. Large muscle coordination is developing
   _____Normally
   _____Slowly
   _____Very slowly

5. Small muscle coordination is developing
   _____Normally
   _____Slowly
   _____Very slowly

6. Handedness
   _____Right
   _____Left
   _____Uses both

7. Attendance
   _____Regular
   _____Frequent absences
   _____A prolonged absence due to _____

Mental and Psychological Development

1. Rhythms
   _____Responds freely
   _____Is improving
   _____Unresponsive

2. Singing
   _____Carries melody
   _____Joins in and is improving
   _____Unresponsive

3. Art work is done
   _____With originality
   _____Satisfactorily
   _____Immaturely
   _____Can cut, paste, use crayons, paint brush, etc.

4. Interest in books and pictures is
   _____Keen
   _____Normal
   _____Passive, indifferent

5. Self expression in classroom
   _____Expresses thoughts especially well
   _____Normal expression
   _____Has difficulty expressing self

6. Work habits
   _____Works independently
   _____Works with supervision
   _____Needs much guidance

7. Ability to plan and carry things through
   _____Normal ability
   _____Needs help in planning
   _____Does not carry out plans

8. Concentration and attention span
   _____Normal
   _____Easily distracted
   _____Short attention span
   _____Excessive energy

9. Ability to follow directions
   _____Forgets, easily confused
   _____Follows simple directions
   _____Follows multiple directions

<u>Emotional Adjustment</u>

1. Stability and security
   _____Normal security
   _____Insecure
   _____Normal stability
   _____Easily excitable
   _____Unresponsive moods
   _____Changes greatly from day to day

2. Ability to meet new situations and take things in stride
   _____Normal
   _____Can meet new situations with guidance
   _____Has difficulty adjusting to (explain)
   _____Outstanding in this ability

Social Adjustment

1. Working with others
   _____Passive
   _____Cooperative
   _____Aggressive
   _____Withdrawing from others

2. Respects rights and property of others
   _____Consistently
   _____Usually
   _____Needs improvement

3. Ability to lead and follow
   _____Accepted by children as a leader
   _____Accepts leadership of other student leader
   _____Tries unsuccessfully to be a leader
   _____Does not follow student leaders
   _____Leader in misbehavior

4. Attitude toward teacher
   _____Normal, healthy
   _____Resents help and correction
   _____Withdraws from teacher
   _____Excessive dependency upon teacher
   _____Reacts aggressively

What is his usual disposition?

Other features which were not mentioned above or which might warrant further consideration (leave blank if they do not apply).

a. Special interests

b. Personal problems

c. Family attitude toward school

d. Parent conferences

e. Home situation

f. Significant medical history

SAMPLE FORM E-3

Sample submitted by Stillwater, Independent School District #834

SURVEY REQUEST TO PARENTS ABOUT PROGRAM

A. General attitude toward school. Has the attitude changed since school began? In what way?

B. Child's interest. What phases of kindergarten does your child tell you about most frequently? How varied are these interests?

C. Attendance. Have you experienced any difficulty in getting your child to school? If so, how did you handle it?

D. Have you observed any changes in your child's social development since the start of school? In what way?

E. What has been the reaction of other children in your family and of your neighbors toward this special consideration for your child?

F. Please express your opinion of this program at the present time. Do you think it is worthwhile?

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Appendix VIII

Supplementary FORMS which may be considered by the local community are notices of acceptance or rejection of the child as an early admittee. Sample forms are submitted here. The Committee did not consider these as <u>essential</u> materials.

SAMPLE FORM F

Sample submitted by Edina-Morningside Public Schools

TO:

FROM: Herbert E. Hartshorn, Director of Elementary Education

Subject: Selective Early Entrance to Kindergarten

Your child, _____, was considered for possible early entrance to kindergarten. We have come to the following decision:

_____Your child will be eligible to enter kindergarten at _____ School this fall. Please go to this school to fill in the registration blanks.

_____Your child will not be eligible to enter kindergarten early but may enter with other children of his age next year.

The children who are permitted to begin kindergarten early will be considered on trial placement. We hope that all of these children will do well in kindergarten. We will be watching this group with great interest and certainly would not eliminate anyone from school without careful study and a fair trial. We would not have allowed them to begin school early if we did not expect them to compete favorably with older children.

No doubt, there will be disappointment if your child was not permitted to enter kindergarten early. This simply means that we did not consider him to be the exceptional child who we could predict could compete favorably with older children. We expect that all of the students admitted will be average and above in this school system and that many of them will be near the top of their class.

Our psychologist reported that approximately one-third of the children recommended for testing by the principals had the mental ability required for early entrance to kindergarten. (The required mental age would place these younger children in the upper half of their class). He considered the majority of the children who were not allowed early admission to be bright, cooperative and pleasant, but just not sufficiently exceptional. A very few were handicapped to an unknown degree by shyness, speech defects or immature work habits. These handicaps, if present, were described to parents at the time of testing.

If you have further questions, you should first contact your elementary school principal.

Samples submitted by St. Louis Park Public Schools

Dear Parents:

It is the decision of the school, based on the results of the testing program for early admission to kindergarten, that your child, _____ _____, is not eligible for early entrance. We shall look forward to having (him,her) enroll in our kindergarten in the school year 1963-1964.

Sincerely yours,

Frances Blake
Director of Elementary Education

Dear Parents:

It is the decision of the school, based on the results of the testing program for early entrance to kindergarten, that your child, _____ _____, will benefit by entering kindergarten this fall. (He,She) may be registered for kindergarten on August 28 or 29 in the elementary school which serves your area.

Sincerely yours,

Frances Blake
Director of Elementary Education